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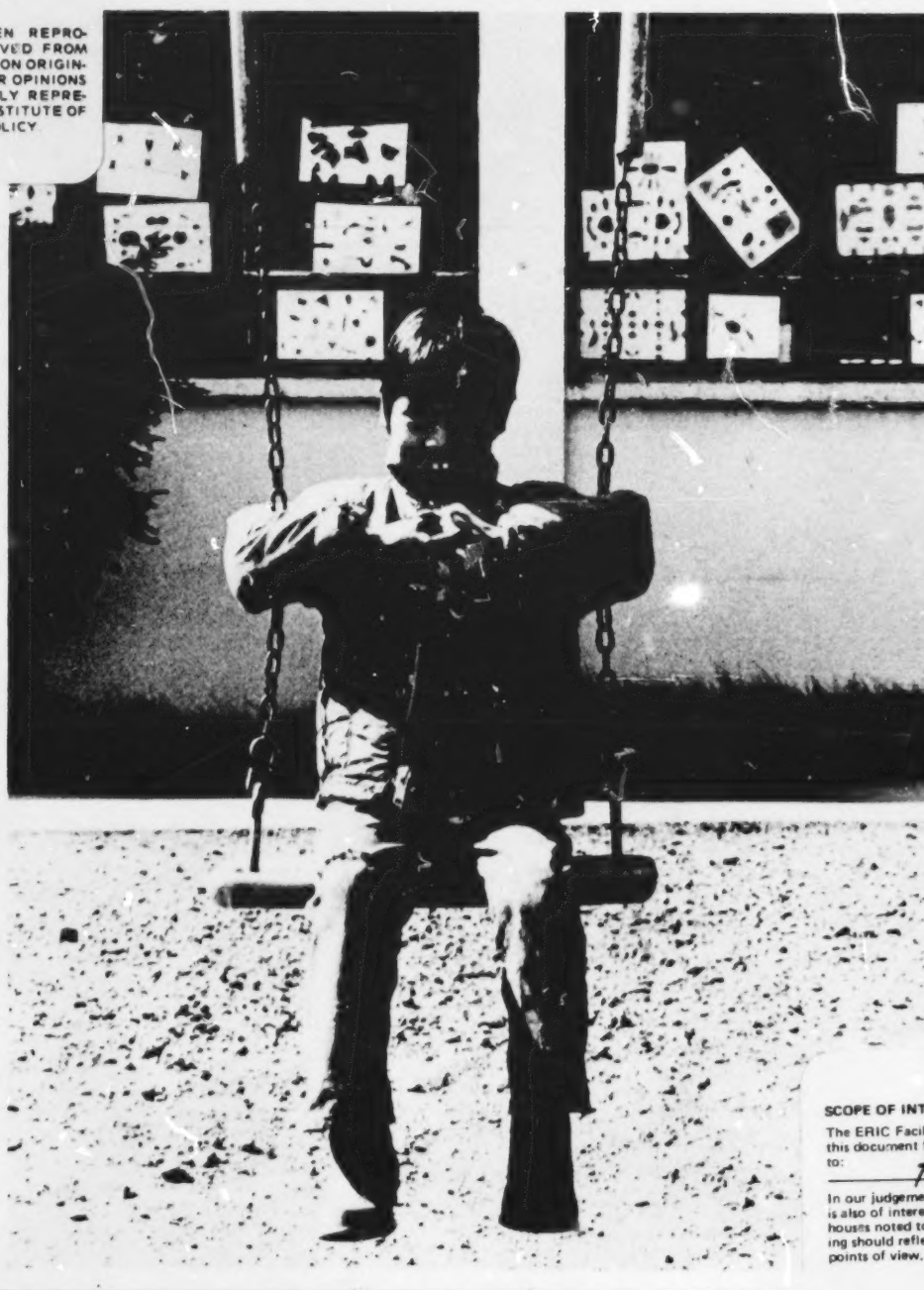
ABSTRACT

Regulations adopted in 1977 by the Alaska State Board of Education governing bilingual-bicultural education in Alaska are presented. The procedure for the initial identification of language dominance in students is set forth. Obligations of school districts toward their non-English-speaking students are detailed. Parental and community involvement is specified. Six types of bilingual/bicultural programs are mandated, and criteria for establishing the appropriateness of given programs for a given district are determined. (JB)

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Regulations for Bilingual - Bicultural Education in Alaska

On October 22, 1977, the Alaska State Board of Education adopted new regulations governing bilingual-bicultural education in Alaska's schools. The purpose of the regulations is to encourage and help school districts, in cooperation with local communities, to offer programs which meet the special needs of children of limited English speaking ability. Appropriate educational programs will help provide equal educational opportunity for these children.

These programs may also have other results such as helping students be more successful in secondary schools and higher education, making it easier for students to gain employment, increasing intercultural communication and understanding, stimulating communication between the community and the schools, and providing more options for all students as they choose a way of life.

The regulations require identification of student needs, development of appropriate educational programs to meet those needs, parental and community involvement in the programs, materials and staff development, and program evaluation.



WHAT HAPPENS FIRST?



Identification of Language Dominance

Before districts can develop programs, they must find out if they have students with limited English speaking ability who need special programs. So the first step is identifying students language dominance. Every student in Alaska will be identified as belonging in one of the six following categories:

- A - students who speak only a language other than English
- B - students who speak mostly a language other than English, but who also speak some English

- C - students who speak a language other than English and English with equal ease
- D - students who speak mostly English but also speak a language other than English
- E - students who speak only English but whose manner of speaking reflects the grammatical structure of another language.
- F - students who speak only English but who do not fit category E

Four Steps for Identification of Language Dominance

There are four steps to identify and assess student language dominance.

First, each child's parents or guardians will be asked to complete a parent questionnaire. Districts will inform parents through workshops, public meetings or public announcements telling why the assessment is being done, how to complete the parent questionnaire, and why complete and accurate data are important.

If the results of the parent questionnaire indicate a category F student, and the student's teacher or teachers agree that the child is not in categories A through E, the district may identify the child as a category F student. The remaining steps of the language assessment will be taken only for the students not initially placed in category F.

Second, a language observation questionnaire will be used to assess further all students not initially identified as category F children. The language observation questionnaire will be done by a person who is bilingual in the student's home or primary language other than English. The questionnaire must be reviewed and accepted by the Department of Education before it is used. Based on the parent questionnaire and the language observation questionnaire, all students shall be tentatively identified as being in one of the six language dominance categories.

Third, the students tentatively identified as being in categories A, B, C and D will be given a language assessment test. The language assessment test must be reviewed and accepted by the department before the

district uses it. The test results will help indicate which category the student belongs in.

Then, using the results of the parent questionnaire, the language observation questionnaire and the language assessment test, the student will be identified as being in the category A, B, C, or D which reflects his or her least degree of English facility. For example, if the results of two of the language identification steps show the student to be in category C and the other step places the student in category B, the district will usually place the student in category B.

Fourth, there is a group of students who were not initially identified as being F students, but who are not category A, B, C or D students. These students have been tentatively identified as being in category E or category F through the language observation questionnaire and the parent questionnaire. The district will review the results of the parent questionnaire and the language observation questionnaire. It will use systematic or prior observation of the student by the school staff.

Then the district will identify these students as being either E or F.

The district is responsible for selecting and training qualified persons to administer the assessment instruments and evaluate the results. The first assessment process must be complete by December 1, 1977, with the data submitted to the department by then. In following years, assessment data and analysis must be submitted by November 1.

After Students Are Identified, What Must Districts Do?

DISTRICT DEVELOPS PLAN OF SERVICE

Districts must provide a plan of service for each school with 8 or more eligible A, B, C, and D students who speak the same language other than English, or 8 or more eligible category E students.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR PROGRAMS?

Programs must be provided to all A and B students, and to those students in categories C, D and E who are underachieving.

Underachieving students in categories C, D and E are those whose overall achievement is at or below:

- 1) minus one standard deviation on a normed test; or
- 2) one year below grade level as measured by the district's ongoing student achievement testing program.

WHAT IF A SCHOOL HAS LESS THAN EIGHT STUDENTS?

If a school has fewer than eight students for whom a program would otherwise be provided, the district shall either provide

the appropriate program or it shall individually meet the needs of each of these students through one-to-one tutoring and assistance.

If the district wishes, it may also provide programs to other students for whom programs are not required by the regulations.

WHAT DOES THE PLAN OF SERVICE INCLUDE?

The annual plan of service must be submitted to the department of education by March 15 of each school year. The plan of service must provide for the following:

- (1) a parent and community involvement
- (2) curriculum/instructional program
- (3) materials development
- (4) staff development
- (5) a description of the district's process for implementing and coordinating the plan of service;
- (6) evaluation

Parental and Community Involvement Required



Parents of bilingual/bicultural students and other members of the community must be directly involved in program development, improvement and evaluation. Districts shall provide enough information and allow enough time for parents to review and discuss all parts of the program with district staff.

Districts must inform parents of students and other community members in each language group for which a program is or will be conducted. Information includes notices in appropriate media and languages, and community meetings.

PROGRAMS

WHAT KINDS OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS MAY BE OFFERED TO SATISFY THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE BILINGUAL-BICULTURAL REGULATIONS?

There are six types of programs:

(1) A "bilingual/bicultural curriculum" which makes use of a student's language other than English and cultural factors — It maintains and develops the student's skills in that language and culture. Additionally, it introduces, develops and maintains all the necessary English skills for the student to function successfully in English. The language-other-than-English instruction may vary from being in the language arts of the language other than English to being in all discipline areas, with the appropriate combination of language other than English and English instruction determined by the district in conjunction

with the parents of its bilingual students.

(2) A "transitional bilingual/bicultural curriculum" means a program which makes use of a student's language other-than-English and cultural factors in instruction only until the student is ready to participate effectively in the English language curriculum of the regular school program. Once this occurs, further instruction in the language other than English stops. Until the student is ready to participate effectively in the English language curriculum of the regular school program, instruction in the language arts of the language other-than-English is provided, and English is taught as a second language.



(3) An "English as a second language curriculum" means a program of instruction which teaches English as a second language, has culturally relevant material in its curriculum, and provides instruction in other subject matter in English.

(4) A "high intensity language training curriculum" means a program which gives a student intensive instruction in English until that student is ready to participate effectively in the English language curriculum of the regular school program, with the student working exclusively on acquisition of English language skills. Following acquisition of those skills, the student gradually takes part in the same curriculum which is provided to the district's non-bilingual students.

(5) A "supplemental English skill and concept development curriculum" means a program in which the instructional content and methods address the language interference needs of students by appropriately supplementing the curriculum provided to the district's non-bilingual students.

(6) A "language-other-than-English as a second language curriculum" means a program which teaches the student's language other than English as a second language. At the primary level, emphasis is on oral language skill development. At the intermediate and secondary levels, language literacy instruction would begin after oral skills are learned. Instruction in other subject matter is conducted in English. At all levels, a special effort is made to incorporate as much as possible the student's non-English culture into the curriculum.



WHICH STUDENTS BELONG IN WHICH PROGRAMS?

The six programs must be provided as follows:

For Category A and B students at primary and intermediate grade levels:

- (A) a bilingual/bicultural curriculum;
- (B) a transitional bilingual/bicultural curriculum;

For Category A and B students at the secondary level:

- (A) a bilingual/bicultural curriculum;
- (B) a transitional bilingual/bicultural curriculum;
- (C) a high intensity language training curriculum;

For underachieving category C and D students at all levels:

- (A) a bilingual/bicultural curriculum;
- (B) an English as a second language curriculum;
- (C) a supplemental English skill and concept development curriculum;
- (D) a language-other-than-English as a second language curriculum;

For underachieving category E students at all levels:

- (A) an English as a second language curriculum;
- (B) a supplemental English skill and concept development curriculum;
- (C) a language-other-than-English as a second language curriculum.

A district may meet the educational needs of underachieving Category E students through non-bilingual programs which it generally provides to its underachieving students. However, the district plan of service must identify and describe those programs.

VARIANCES

A district may request variances from the program requirements described above. The commissioner of education may grant a requested variance if the district shows that the proposed program is feasible and promises to provide equal educational opportunity.



PARENTAL OPTIONS FOR STUDENT PLACEMENT IN PROGRAMS

A student's parent or guardian may request that the student be placed in its regular program for non-bilingual students or in a program with less non-English emphasis than that called for by the student's language assessment category. The district shall place the student according to the parent or guardian request, if the requested alternative program is reasonably available.

RE-EVALUATION OF STUDENT NEEDS

The district plan must also provide for re-evaluating the needs of each student in the programs on an on-going basis. If the students's needs change, he or she will be reassigned to other curriculums or individualization of instruction. The district must assure that the student is in the program which fits his or her needs.



WHEN MUST THE PROGRAMS BE AVAILABLE?

There will be a phase-in of the requirements of the bilingual-bicultural education regulations, with programs fully implemented by the end of 1978-79 school year.

The phase-in must meet the following time lines:

First, activities promoting parental and community involvement must be begun by the end of the first semester of the 1977-78 school year;

Second, significant progress in establishing necessary curricula, especially for programs for A and B students; identifying instructional materials; and recruitment and training of instructional staff, all as required by the regulations, must be made by the end of the 1977-78 school year.

Third, the district must submit its initial plan of service by March 15, 1978, for review by the Department of Education.

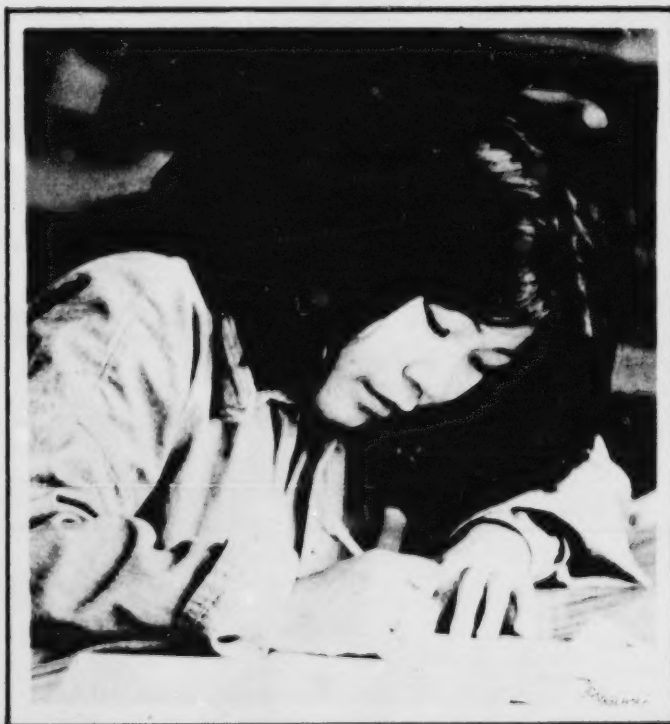
Districts Have Other Responsibilities

MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT

Districts have a responsibility to provide adequate materials for the educational programs required for their students. If materials are not available, districts shall establish an action plan to develop or secure them. The action plan should involve development and review of the materials by classroom teachers, individuals who are native to the language and culture for which the materials are to be developed, and linguists. Materials should be educationally and linguistically sound, and an accurate reflection of the appropriate language and culture. The department will help in developing material and coordinating resources for district use.

INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

The districts must make sure that the instructional staff have the necessary skills to teach the programs being given.



If regularly certificated Type A teachers who are appropriately bilingual cannot be obtained, bilingual instructors may be used to implement the program. If bilingual instructors are used, the district must do two things:

- (1) implement an action plan to train or otherwise get certificated type A teachers who are bilingual in the languages in which the district has programs; and
- (2) make sure that its bilingual instructors are paid according to their level of responsibilities and duties performed by them, and their training and experience.

Nothing limits a district's authority to require that a bilingual instructor enter into a formal program of training which leads to a Type A certificate.

TRAINING PLAN

Each district must develop a staff training plan for all bilingual program instructional staff. The plan must include objectives which are directly related to the needs of students and methods by which those objectives can be reached.

It must also include methods for selecting teachers, paraprofessionals and potential teachers for training. In addition, the plan must include the names of individuals who will conduct training, the location of the training, content of the training (including linguistic/cultural familiarity with the students' background), design for evaluating the training and a proposed time frame for carrying out the training plan.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF STAFF

Each district must set out specific recruitment and selection processes for its bilingual program staff. Through cooperative agreements with institutions of higher education, it shall establish and make available a career ladder for its bilingual paraprofessionals which leads to regular Type A certification.

STUDENT-STAFF RATIO

The student to staff ratio in the district's bilingual programs may not be higher than the overall student to staff ratio for the district.

EVALUATION

Each district shall establish a procedure for evaluating its program each year. The procedure must include, but is not necessarily limited to, collecting information concerning student progress.

FUNDING

At this time, November, 1977, the funding mechanism for bilingual programs is through grant applications. That funding process cannot be changed except by action of the Alaska state legislature. The Department of Education will ask the legislature to consider changing funding to a foundation formula approach during the 1978 legislative session.



The Department of Education recognizes that knowledge of bilingual-bicultural education is expanding rapidly. Districts are encouraged to develop innovative programs and, if necessary, to seek variances for those programs. The department will assist in materials development, staff development and coordination of resources for district use.

These regulations will be reviewed in spring, 1977, to see if any changes are appropriate.



For more information, contact:

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